



NEWS RELEASE

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests & Thunder Basin National Grassland

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Contact: Laramie Ranger District, 307-745-2300
Karl C. Vester, 307-745-2323

Temporary closures on the Laramie Ranger District

(Laramie, Wyo.) June 10, 2010 – Effective immediately, the Forest Service is closing the Medicine Bow Rail-Trail; Willow, Spruce, and Pine Campgrounds; and a portion of National Forest System Road 351, commonly known as the Barber Lake Road. The road is closed between the lower junction with Highway 130 and Willow Campground. Damage from winter runoff and unusually wet spring conditions have necessitated the closures.

“We understand that some visitors may be disappointed by these closures especially in light of the delayed opening of campgrounds at higher elevations due to the snowpack and/or fallen trees associated with the mountain pine beetle epidemic. Please understand that public health and safety is our foremost concern,” said District Ranger Larry Sandoval. “We don't want visitors to be exposed to dangerous flood waters, and we don't want their vehicles to become trapped if a road washes out and becomes impassable. We appreciate the public's understanding and patience.”

Visitors should be aware that Barber Lake is accessible via Barber Lake Rd. at the upper junction with Highway 130. Travel by large recreational vehicle or truck and trailer combination is not advised as there is insufficient room to turn around.

These closures will be in effect until further notice. As soon as the flood waters recede and necessary repairs are made, the closures will be lifted.

Although designated and open to travel, other roads in this area may be impassable or partially impassable. Other campground, road, and trail closures may become necessary in the coming days. For up-to-date information on these closures and conditions, please contact the Laramie Ranger District office at 307-745-2300.

Fallen trees, snow drifts, and extremely muddy conditions are present during this time of year. Motor vehicle users should resist the temptation to travel outside the road or trail prism and through flooded or muddy, rutted areas. Skirting an obstacle leads to widening the route, which is unauthorized and causes resource damage, such as damage to wetlands and increased erosion and sedimentation that can impact fish habitat and water quality.

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